

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/National Weather Service (NWS) has a requirement to acquire a Doppler weather radar system to enhance areas of inadequate coverage identified within the present Next Generation Weather Radar (NEXRAD) Network. The augmentation Doppler weather radar system shall use data acquisition schemes and produce data compatible with the NWS weather radar network.

NOAA/NWS expects to award a contract to assemble and operate a remotely controlled 10cm wavelength weather radar having a beamwidth of one degree and meteorological signal detection capability to display reflectivity to a range of 460km and velocity to a range of 230 km. Ancillary requirements will include data acquisition, signal processing, and remote meteorological display equipment. The system shall have a useful operational service life of at least twenty (20) years.

The solicitation will contain options for site installation, spares, operator training, equipment maintenance, and a radar data output interface to a government supplied meteorological analysis terminal.

Draft documents describing the needs of the NOAA/NWS are available for review by industry. A list of questions being posed by the National Weather Service to industry regarding this procurement is attached. Firms may also identify themselves as possible primes, subcontractors, or both, to facilitate potential teaming arrangements. Small businesses are encouraged to identify their size status.

Release of the solicitation is planned for later this calendar year. Comments are requested by September 1, 2000. All comments are to be forwarded to the attention of Mr. Greg Smith at the following address:

U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA
Acquisition Management Division (OFA612)
1305 East-West Highway, SSMC4/7604
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3281

If you have questions regarding this request, you may contact Mr. Greg Smith at (301) 713-0823, x118, or by email at Gregory.N.Smith@agf.noaa.gov or by fax at (301) 713-0806.

Questions:

- 1) Does your company currently offer a radar configuration from your standard/established product line which could be offered to meet this requirement? Where does the system exceed the requirements? Where does the system need relief?
- 2) Antenna sidelobes result in signal detection via the sidelobes causing contamination of the signal viewed through the mainlobe. The minimum acceptable range of performance, as stated in the Specification TABLE 3-5, Antenna Characteristics, is minimally satisfactory. The maximum range of performance is satisfactory for all sites and meteorological conditions. What level of performance does your company offer with your system? What is the differential in cost associated with meeting the maximum requirements in this range?
- 3) Velocity de-aliasing and identification of range folding obscuration greatly facilitate interpretation of meteorological data and displays. Please describe the schemes used in your equipment for velocity de-aliasing and identification of range folding obscuration, if any, and how do your current capabilities relate to the Specification requirement of section 3.6.1 for velocity de-aliasing/echo obscuration? What additional costs would be associated with meeting the maximum requirements of section 3.6.1 in the Specification?
- 4) Factory test requires the first system to be fully assembled and demonstrated in the factory prior to shipment. Does your company have the capability to demonstrate complete system operation prior to shipment to the installation site? What cost savings would be realized if demonstration of complete system operation was not formally required during factory test? What risks are associated with demonstrating system operation for the first time at installation, in the Evansville, Indiana area? If complete system operation was not required during factory test, what level of subsystem test would be completed in the factory prior to shipment?
- 5) Does your company offer a radar installation service that includes all activities necessary to install the radar including such items as installation of the shelters, tower, ground grid, pad, fencing, access road, and electrical power?
- 6) What changes would you recommend to the radar Specification and/or Statement of Work which would simplify this acquisition?

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Evansville, Indiana, Weather Radar

7) Does your company have the ability to support this product for twenty years? How does your company introduce upgrades?

8) The intent of the Government is to ingest base radar data into a NEXRAD meteorological processor. Does your firm have the ability to tailor base radar data from your radar system to alternate protocols or message formats?